

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-9 and 13-21 are pending; claims 1, 4, 6-9, 13-18 and 20 are rejected; and claims 3, 5, 19 and 21 are objected to in this application. Claims 1, 7, 9, 18 and 21 are amended; and claims 3, 5, 6 and 19 are cancelled hereby.

Responsive to the objection to claims 6 and 7, Applicant has cancelled claim 6 and amended claim 7. The Examiner indicated that the claims should recite an uncoupling of the drive train from a hot roll gear. No hot roll gear is recited in the underlying claim. So in order to implement the Examiner's request, a hot roll gear has been inserted into claim 7 so that the suggested construct could be accommodated.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1, 4, 6-8, 18 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,772,913 (Watanabe), Applicant has amended claims 1 and 18, by respectively incorporating the elements of claims 3 and 19, which have been indicated would be allowable if placed in independent form. For the foregoing reason, Applicant submits that claims 1, 4, 7, 8, 18 and 20 are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 9 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent JP09-230723A (Mizuno), Applicant has amended claim 9 and submits that claims 9 and 13 are now in condition for allowance.

Mizuno discloses a pressure roller that is switched to a first state of press contact with a belt and has a supporting roller 14 and a heating roller 16. The pressure roller has a second state away from fixing belt 12 by way of a switching mechanism. An arm is turned to bring pressure roller 24 into press-contact with fixing belt 12. A drive transmission gear is engaged with the gear of heating roller 16. In the second state the arm is reversely turned to separate pressure roller

24 from fixing belt 12 and to bring pressure roller 24 to press-contact with heating roller 30

(Abstract).

In contrast, claim 9 as amended recites in part:

said drive train adapted to be engaged with and disengaged from said hot roll gear,  
said drive train being disengaged from said hot roll gear during duplex routing of  
media through the fuser.

(Emphasis added). Applicant submits that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Mizuno or any of the other cited references alone or in combination includes distinct advantages thereover.

Mizuno discloses a fixing device having a pressure roller and a drive transmission gear that is engaged with the gear of the heating roller and an arm that is reversely turned to separate the pressure roller from the fixing belt. The pressure roller is brought into press contact with a heating roller and the drive transmission gear is engaged with the drive transmission gear of the heating roller. In contrast to the construct of Mizuno, Applicant's invention includes a drive train that is disengaged from the hot roll gear during the duplex routing of piece of media through the fuser. Therefore, Mizuno and any of the other references, alone or in combination fail to disclose, teach or suggest a drive train adapted to be engaged with and disengaged from the hot roll gear, the drive train being disengaged from the hot roll gear during duplex routing of media through the fuser, as recited in claim 9.

Applicant's invention has distinct advantages over the cited references in that Applicant's invention disengages the drive from the fuser rollers during the duplexing operation, thereby reducing the load on the motor during the duplexing operation. A further advantage of Applicant's invention is that the combination of the engagement and disengagement of the hot roll gear advantageously allows a lower load on the bi-directional motor than the prior art. Yet another advantage of the present invention is that it allows for the selection of a more efficient

less power consuming motor. For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that claim 9 and claim 13 depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Claims 14-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mizuno in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,954,845 (Yano et al.). However, claims 14-17 depend from claim 9, which is in condition for allowance for the reasons given above. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 14-17 are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that claims 3, 5, 19 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. To that end Applicant has amended claim 1 to incorporate the element of claim 3, incorporated the element of claim 19 into claim 18 and placed claim 21 in independent form. Further, Applicant has cancelled claims 3, 5 and 19.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that no combination of the cited references teach, disclose or suggest the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicant has overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicant hereby conditionally petitions therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,

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**Electronically Filed March 22, 2007**

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